

REMARKS

I. Summary of the Office Action Mailed May 14, 2008

In the Office Action mailed May 14, 2008 (the “Office Action”), the Examiner rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The Examiner also rejected claims 36 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite and failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention.

In addition, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 34, and 38-39 on the ground of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as allegedly being unpatentable over claims 1-5 of U.S. Patent No. 6,526,981.

Further, the Examiner rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,257,240 (“Shesol”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,237,010 listing Grabenkort *et al.* as inventors. Applicant notes that U.S. Patent No. 4,237,010 lists Zimmerly as the sole inventor (not Grabenkort), and appears to be directed to unrelated technology. However, U.S. Patent No. 5,238,010 lists Grabenkort *et al.* as inventors and is listed by the Examiner in the “Notice of References Cited,” mailed on November 27, 2007. Accordingly, Applicant has proceeded herein as though the Examiner intended to cite U.S. Patent No. 5,238,010 (“Grabenkort”).

The Examiner rejected the remaining claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Shesol and Grabenkort in view of various other references: claims 31-33 in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,142,966 (“Hely”); claims 34-35 in view of Bierman; claims 36-37 in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,807,300 (“Nix”); and claims 38-39 in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,132,399.

II. Status of the Claims

Claims 1-60 are currently pending, with claims 2-30 and 40-60 having been previously withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1 and 31-39 are currently pending and stand rejected. No claims have been amended by way of this response.

III. Response to Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Specifically, the Examiner stated that the “fabric connector being connected to the member flange such that it does not traverse the sidewall has not been sufficiently disclosed.” (May 14, 2008 Office Action at Page 3). Applicant respectfully disagrees with this rejection.

The Examiner stated that Applicant elected Figure 19, and Figure 19 shows “the fabric connector attached to the hollow member from a perspective of underneath.” (*Id.*). Therefore, the Examiner explained that one would not be able to determine whether the fabric connector traverses the sidewall. (*Id.*). However, Figure 19 “is a top plain view of an embodiment of a site guard.” (Application, ¶ 62) (emphasis added). Thus, Figure 19 illustrates that the fabric connector does not traverse the sidewall. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

The Examiner also rejected claims 36 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite and failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. Once again, Applicant must respectfully disagree. Based on the Application, the “scope of the claim[s] is clear to a hypothetical person possessing the ordinary level of skill in the pertinent art.” (M.P.E.P. § 2171). For example, based in Figure 19 and Paragraph 119, one of ordinary level of skill in the art would understand that claims 36 and 37 “particularly point out and distinctly define the metes and bounds of the subject matter that will be protected by the patent grant.” (*Id.*). Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

IV. Response to the Double Patenting Rejection

Applicant notes that claims 1, 34, and 38-39 stand provisionally rejected as being allegedly unpatentable for non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1-5 of U.S. Patent No. 6,526,981. Applicant respectfully submits that upon allowance of the pending claims, Applicant will submit a terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.321(c).

V. Response to the Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

As stated above, the Examiner rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Shesol in view of Grabenkort. The effective filing date of Shesol is

June 5, 2000. The Rule 131 Declaration submitted herewith establishes that the present invention was conceived and reduced to practice prior to the effective filing date of Shesol. Thus, Shesol is not prior art to the present Application.

Moreover, Grabenkort does not teach or disclose the present invention as it does not teach “a hollow member” with “at least one fabric connector.” (May 14, 2008 Office Action at Page 5). Consequently, Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn and submits that claim 1 is patentable.

In addition, claims 31-39 are patentable as they depend on independent claim 1.

VI. Conclusion

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request notice to that effect. Should the Examiner wish to discuss the case with the undersigned, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at 312-701-8115.

Respectfully submitted,



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